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AgriCompetitiveness Program

Applicant Guide

March 2018

Canada

AgriCompetitiveness Program
Applicant Guide

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For more information reach us at www.agr.gc.ca or call us toll-free 1-877-246-4682.

Purpose of this Guide

This guide will:

1. help you determine if you may be eligible for funding from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) under the AgriCompetitiveness Program
2. provide you with directions and explanations to assist you in completing the project application form

Your completed application form will provide AAFC with the information needed to make decisions about eligibility and funding. It is highly recommended that you read this guide in its entirety before you complete the form.

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Annex A: How to Apply

1.0 Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a five-year, $3 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. In addition, producers will continue to have access to a robust suite of Business Risk Management (BRM) programs.

The Partnership comes into force April 1, 2018.

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership focuses on six priority areas:

- **Science, research, and innovation** – to help industry use science and innovation to improve resiliency and increase productivity
- **Markets and trade** – to open new markets and help farmers and food processors improve their competitiveness through skills development, improved export capacity, underpinned by a strong and efficient regulatory system
- **Environmental sustainability and climate change** – to help the sector reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment and adapt to climate change by enhancing sustainable growth while increasing production
- **Value-added agriculture and agri-food processing** – to support the continued growth of the value-added agriculture and agri-food processing sector
- **Public trust** – to build a firm foundation for public trust through solid regulations, improving assurance systems and traceability
- **Risk Management** – to enable proactive and effective risk management, mitigation and adaptation to create a resilient sector

For more information, please visit the Canadian Agricultural Partnership website.

The AgriCompetitiveness Program is a program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

1.1 About the AgriCompetitiveness Program

AgriCompetitiveness programming will assist industry-led efforts to provide producers with information needed to build capacity and support the sector's development. Funding will be provided to support sector-led activities such as farmer-oriented seminars, and conferences that identify industry best practices and build the capacity of the sector, farm business management and farm safety information and tools, as well as activities which build agricultural awareness.

The AgriCompetitiveness Program aims to help the agricultural sector to leverage, coordinate and build on existing capacity, enhance safety, adapt to changing commercial and regulatory environments, seize new opportunities, share best practices, and provide mentorship opportunities. The program will build on existing capacity by facilitating the sharing and expansion of skills, knowledge, and best practices, and increase agricultural awareness. It will also provide for activities that allow agri-

businesses to transition, adapt, and improve their profitability by nurturing the entrepreneurial capacity of new and established farmers, delivering farm safety initiatives, and cultivating individual and industry leadership.

The program will provide funding to the sector to promote the benefits of a career in agriculture and to enhance the public's perception of agriculture and its role in the economy.

The program will also support activities undertaken by important domestic agricultural fairs and exhibitions which have strong international and domestic components, as well as, generic agriculture awareness activities which will help strengthen public trust about the origin of the food they eat and how it is produced.

Program Objective

The objective of the AgriCompetitiveness Program is to:

- help the industry further develop capacity throughout the sector and facilitating the sharing and expansion of:
    - skills, knowledge, and best practices among industry members
    - business management and planning capacity in the sector as it relates to production practices, business and financial management practices, and environmental practices, which builds resilience and adaptability
    - assistance for producers to learn how to develop and implement business and strategic plans to help them capitalize on opportunities and manage a wide range of risks
    - platforms to help the sector build leadership and facilitate knowledge transfer, which will assist the sector to be better able to respond to market demands and promote agricultural awareness to build public trust

1.2 Eligible applicants

The following organization types are eligible under this program:

Not-for-profit: organizations that operate solely for social welfare, civic improvement, pleasure or recreation, any other purpose except profit. They may include:

- associations
- Indigenous groups

Notes: Eligible applicants must be legal entities capable of entering into legally binding agreements.

Associations should operate on a national basis. Consideration may be given to regional not-for-profit associations if there is no representation at the national level, and the applicant can demonstrate the ability to deliver a project that is national, and/or agriculture and agri-food sector wide in scope.

Commodity organizations, academic institutions, for-profit organizations, and individuals are not eligible to receive funding under this program.

1.3 Funding and cost-sharing

Available Funding

The maximum AAFC contribution for an applicant will normally not exceed $1,000,000 per year or a maximum of $5,000,000 over five years.

The maximum AAFC contribution for a project undertaken by a national fair to carry out awareness activities during the fair will normally not exceed $100,000 per year or a maximum of $500,000 over five years.

Cost sharing

Eligible project costs will normally be shared between AAFC and you as follows:

- a maximum of 50% AAFC and a minimum of 50% Applicant

You must clearly indicate all sources of funding for the project, including your contribution and other industry and/or partner sources of funding including:

- other federal government departments and agencies*
- provincial/territorial governments*
- municipal government*
- industry and/or partners such as:
    - industry associations and networks
    - businesses
    - academia

*Total government funding (other federal departments and agencies, provincial/territorial, and municipal governments) cannot exceed 85%.

Your portion of the cost-share can be a combination of both cash and in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions can only account for a maximum of 25% of total project costs.

What is a cash contribution?

A cash contribution is an expense requiring a cash outlay, by either your organization or by a participant/contributor (such as a partner or other government), during the term of the contribution agreement (CA). Specifically, a cash contribution is an expenditure for an eligible project cost incurred by your organization, or another project participant.

AAFC will only reimburse cash contributions for eligible project costs that are incurred and paid for by your organization. A cash contribution made by another project participant should be reported as part of your sources of funding, and must be an eligible project cost.

What is an in-kind contribution?

In-kind means the fair market value attributed for goods and the fair value attributed for services that are contributed to this project and require no outlay of cash during the term of the CA by you or a contributor. These contributions must be eligible costs. They will not be reimbursed by AAFC.

Eligible costs

All costs claimed or contributed under the program must fall within the program cost categories and respect all limitations. For more information and details on cost categories, eligible/ineligible costs and other limitations, refer to the Project Costs section of Annex A: How to Apply.

1.4 Eligible activities

The Program will prioritize projects that advance economic growth and build public trust. Program priorities and examples of eligible activities are:

- **Building skills, knowledge, and best practices among industry members**
  - facilitation of the sharing and expansion of skills and knowledge among industry members
  - develop information to strengthen the ability of the sector to manage transformation, respond to change and adopt best practices in their farming operations
  - tools to facilitate the implementation of business and strategic plans to increase the potential for opportunities and profitability

- **Helping the sector build leadership and facilitate knowledge transfer**
  - develop leadership and entrepreneurship throughout the sector for youth, new and young farmers
  - events, conferences, workshops, training, tools, web sites, newsletters to develop, share, and disseminate information regarding industry best practices, farm business management, farm safety, and agricultural awareness

- **Increasing business management and planning capacity within the sector**
  - development of new farm management information, resources, tools, publications
  - expansion of awareness of farm management practices, business management, assessment and planning capacity in the industry
  - capacity and leadership building through outreach, networking and training
  - delivery of farm business management information, resources, tools, publications
  - farmer-oriented workshops, seminars, conferences, and information sharing to increase business skills

- **Promoting farm safety**
  - development and dissemination of farm safety information, resources and tools to help producers, their families and their workers make farms a safe place to live and work.

- **Increasing public trust**
  - creation and dissemination of generic agriculture awareness material to increase consumer education and awareness which will reinforce public confidence in Canada's food production systems and promote public trust
  - International business centers hosted by important domestic agricultural fairs and exhibitions which have strong international and domestic components and were previously funded under the AgriMarketing Program (the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, Canadian Western Agribition, Farmfair International, Calgary Stampede) which help advance the Government's priorities by raising awareness of Canadian agriculture both domestically and internationally.

1.5 Application deadlines

Applications will be accepted from **February 13, 2018** until **September 30, 2022**, or until funding has been fully committed or until otherwise announced by the program. The program ends March 31, 2023.

For information on how to complete a project application, refer to Annex A: How to Apply.

2.0 Expected Results

Federally delivered CAP activities will help the agriculture and agri-food sector grow and become more resilient. Budget 2017 set an ambitious target to grow agri-food exports to $75 billion by 2025.

Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector is one of the most respected in the world. Government plays a key role in providing tools to help the sector adapt to and align with public values.

Today's globalized marketplace creates both new opportunities and challenges for the performance and sustainable growth of Canada's diverse agriculture and agri-food sector. The sector's success is dependent on strong collaboration between industry and governments to remain competitive and prosper in this complex environment.

The expected outcome of the AgriCompetitiveness Program is:

- an agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector which has an increased level of entrepreneurial skill, knowledge and awareness of issues, practices, and best practices. This will ultimately help the sector to:
    - leverage and coordinate existing capacity
    - transition and adapt to changing requirements and conditions
    - seize new opportunities

3.0 Assessment criteria

Project proposals must be related to delivering national services and/or products in one or more of the areas of developing agri-businesses entrepreneurial capacity, including:

- the development of youth, young and established farmers
- farm safety initiatives
- business skills development
- individual and industry leadership development
- agriculture awareness

Assessments will consider the overall quality of the application, and the extent to which the application meets, at a minimum, the following:

- The application is complete and the proposed project is eligible
- Your organization has the capacity to deliver the project. Carefully consider your resources and timelines
- The proposed activities, including expected results and outcomes, support program objectives and priorities
- The degree to which the proposed project can demonstrate a current or potential market opportunity or need
- The proposed activities and expenditures are eligible, reasonable and required to meet the project objectives

- The Applicant possesses or has access to the qualifications (such as capability/capacity including the necessary technical, financial and managerial capabilities & capacities) and experience required to complete the project
- All sources of funding for the project funded under this stream are identified
- Project linkages to building entrepreneurial capacity and leadership in the sector
- Evaluation of the project's impact to stakeholders and how it benefits the sector

An appropriate funding amount is determined through the application and assessment process. Funding amounts are determined based on factors that include:

- scope and duration of project
- reasonableness and fair market value of proposed eligible expenses
- importance of proposed eligible activities for greater impact to the sector
- reasonableness of the overall projected cost of eligible expenditures given the projected outcome(s)
- other sources of funding
- demonstrated due diligence in obtaining and reporting on performance results

Further due diligence may also assess such requirements as:

- the technical and financial viability of the project and the proposed work plan

4.0 Reporting on your project

Should you be approved for funding, you will be required to report on finances, performance and results. These reports include:

Progress Reports:

You will be required to provide progress reports describing the activities completed and progress made towards deliverables, as described in the Project Work Plan.

Performance Reports:

You will also be required to provide performance reports annually and at the end of the project. The reports will track progress against mutually agreed to performance measures outlined in the CA.

Financial Reports:

Financial reporting is required with each request for reimbursement of expenditures, in addition to year-end accounting and other financial reports.

Other reports may be required at AAFC's discretion.

5.0 Considerations

5.1 M-30 Act (Quebec organizations only)

The Province of Quebec's M-30 legislation may apply to Quebec based applicants only. It is the *Act Respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q., c. M-30).

More information on the Act is available online or by contacting the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation (MAPAQ) at dpci@mapaq.gouv.qc.ca.

M-30 applies to various types of Quebec organizations, for example, organizations located in Québec and receiving more than half of their financing from the Government of Quebec may be subject to the Act.

All Quebec based organizations will have to address this matter and demonstrate their compliance with the Act during the project assessment process, and prior to entering into a contribution agreement.

6.0 After you apply

Once an application has been submitted, an acknowledgment notice will be forwarded to the applicant.

Note: You should not consider an application as submitted to the program until you receive the acknowledgement notice.

Our goal is to:

- respond to general inquiries made to our phone number or email address before the end of the next business day
- acknowledge receipt of your application within one business day
- assess your application and send you an approval or a rejection notification letter within 100 business days of receiving a complete application package

Please note that even if a project meets all eligibility criteria, the submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of the Minister or of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada officials to provide funding for the proposed project. The Minister retains discretion to determine, based on other public policy and public interest considerations, whether an application that meets the criteria identified in this Guide will ultimately receive funding.

7.0 Contact us

Before you apply, please read Annex A: How to Apply for detailed information on the application process.

For more information on the AgriCompetitiveness Program, please contact us by:

Telephone: 1-877-246-4682
TDD/TTY: 613-773-2600

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